



Maricopa County Animal Care & Control

Frequently asked questions about stray animals in Maricopa County

UNWANTED AND STRAY ANIMALS

Maricopa County Animal Care & Control (AC&C) runs lost and found as well as adoption centers for stray and unwanted dogs and cats. We also rescue dogs in police emergencies, quarantine dogs and cats that have bitten a human being, and assist law enforcement agencies with animal-related issues, including animal cruelty or abuse, in the unincorporated areas of the County and the cities/towns that we contract with. AC&C field officers do not pick up cats unless they have bitten a human being; however, they can be brought to either of our centers.

Once a dog or cat comes into an AC&C Center as a stray, meaning we don't know his owner, he is held a minimum of 72 hours in the hopes of finding the owners. If the animal is wearing identification, microchipped or tattooed, we will attempt to contact the owner and hold the animal up to seven days. Unless an animal has clear identification, has been rescued in a police related situation and the police tell us who the owner is or, AC&C is told otherwise, the animal will be held as a stray. In general, animals will not be held longer than the normal 72-hour or seven-day holding period without a court order. Therefore, law enforcement officials need to keep in close contact with AC&C during investigations.

Once the holding period is up, animals are evaluated for their temperament and health to determine if they are eligible for adoption. Please call (602) 506-PETS for assistance with a stray or aggressive dog. All other parties should

call their local police department after hours in the case of an animal emergency.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

AC&C does not have the legislative authority to enforce animal cruelty laws; therefore, we rely on local law enforcement and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to enforce State statutes (13-2910) and local ordinances. Members of the public are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement agency if animal cruelty is witnessed.

AC&C will assist law enforcement agencies with cruelty investigations when animal handling, medical care and experts are needed. *We strongly encourage all law enforcement agencies to take animal abuse seriously and enforce the laws.* If a law enforcement agency is involved in an animal cruelty case and needs our assistance to care for an animal, if possible, please contact us in advance so our staff can prepare and maintain appropriate records. Remember, unless told otherwise, all animals will be considered stray (held for 72 hours) or Hold (if an owner is known, held for seven days). If you are charging someone with animal cruelty please follow up with AC&C staff and send a court hold immediately. Without the court hold, we are obligated to return the animal to the owners if they claim him.

INJURED ANIMALS

AC&C's STAR program will provide needed medical care to sick or injured stray animals in an emergency situation. If you encounter an injured

For more information on animal care, behavior or AC&C programs, call (602) 506-PETS or visit pets.maricopa.gov

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animal, contact our Call Center at (602)506-PETS. An animal control officer will bring the animal into our clinic who will assess the animal's needs. Whenever possible, injured animals are given medical attention and placed in foster care for recovery. Once cured, the animal is placed up for adoption. This is a program that is run by donations.

ANIMAL SERVICES

AC&C provides numerous free or low cost medical and educational services to the public. Services include vaccinations, spay/neuter surgery, and medical care. Call (602) 506-PETS for more information.

DEAD ANIMALS

Contact your local city government. In the unincorporated areas of Maricopa County, call (602) 506-PETS. If you are reporting a dead dog or cat in the roadway contact your local jurisdiction's refuse removal services.

DOG LICENSES AND DOGS OFF LEASH

Animal Control Officers enforce the animal control ordinances in the cities and towns we contract with (Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tempe, Paradise Valley, Chandler, Gilbert, Queen Creek, Cave Creek, Carefree, Guadalupe, Glendale, Tolleson, Goodyear, Gila Bend), as well as the unincorporated areas of Maricopa County. We also contract with the Avondale and Peoria Police Departments for assistance when they contact us directly (but not the citizens of these towns). All dogs in Maricopa County are required to have a current rabies vaccination and a dog license. AC&C offers vaccinations for \$10 at all three locations. Dog licenses cost \$10 for altered animals and \$25 for un-altered animals. Licenses can be purchased at all three locations, on-line at pets.maricopa.gov, or via telephone. All dogs are required to be on leash or confined on your property at all times. If you see a dog off the leash in one of the jurisdictions listed above, contact our Call Center at (602)506-PETS.

ANIMAL ADOPTIONS

Once an animal is deemed adoptable there is no set time that an animal is held available for

adoption. This is based solely upon availability of space at our centers and the continued health and temperament of the animal. Animals that are turned in by an owner are evaluated within 24 hours; if suitable, they are then made available for adoption. Adoptions are held at all three of our Animal Care Centers. AC&C has a sliding scale adoption fee that allows us to care for and place animals that require special medical care, grooming or training. The Guardian Angel program allows AC&C to adjust adoption fees from \$0 (for animals with temperament challenges) to \$150 (which covers the entire cost of an adoption). On average, the adoption fee is \$70 for dogs, and \$55 for cats. The fee includes sterilization, a microchip, vaccinations and a license.

ALTERNATIVES TO PET RELINQUISHMENT

AC&C can take in 100-200 dogs and cats every day. Many of these animals are euthanized due to lack of space and homes. We are asking for your help with this problem. If you plan to turn your own animal into the shelter, please reconsider. AC&C has the following programs available to assist you in keeping your family pet: behavior counseling, low cost dog training classes, low cost vaccinations and spay/neuter services, pet food bank and a list of pet-friendly apartments. If there is something else that is needed to help you keep your pet, please contact at AC&C at (602) 506-PETS.

FERAL CATS

AC&C is committed to effectively and humanely controlling the free-roaming cat problem in Maricopa County. In examining effective programs across the country, AC&C has concluded that the most effective solution is a Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) program. The AC&C TNR program is called Operation Felix. Through Operation Felix, AC&C offers feral cat caretakers access to low cost spay/neuter services, pet food bank and education services. For more information on Operation Felix, attend an orientation meeting the third Tuesday of each month. Call (602) 506-PETS to register.